

# The Art Creation Design of The Dance Theatre “The Margin of Our Land”

Sahrul N.<sup>1\*</sup> Elizar<sup>2</sup> Ali Sukri<sup>3</sup> Kurniasih Zaitun<sup>4</sup>

1. Theatre Department, Faculty of Performing Arts, Indonesian Institute of the Arts Padangpanjang, West Sumatra, Indonesia
2. Karawitan Department, Faculty of Performing Arts, Indonesian Institute of the Arts Padangpanjang, West Sumatra, Indonesia
3. Dance Department, Faculty of Performing Arts, Indonesian Institute of the Arts Padangpanjang, West Sumatra, Indonesia
4. Theatre Department, Faculty of Performing Arts, Indonesian Institute of the Arts Padangpanjang, West Sumatra, Indonesia

\* E-mail of the corresponding author: [sharief.kirun@gmail.com](mailto:sharief.kirun@gmail.com)

*This research was funded by the Directorate for Research and Community Service, Directorate General for Research and Development, Ministry of Research, Technology, and Higher Education.*

## Abstract

The process of art creation is essentially a process of transforming ideas into practice. In order to achieve this goal, the process of art creation is carried out systematically and supported by adequate scientific devices so that the ideas selected can be processed to maximum effect. In addition to carrying out research with supporting scientific approaches, these ideas must also be realized in the form of an auditory-visual work of art, in this case a performance of dance theatre, and supported by an attractive musical composition.

The work of art entitled “The Margin of Our Land” departs from the social and cultural potential and conditions in Minangkabau that are related to ownership and control of *ulayat* land rights. From these social and cultural potential and conditions, the theme of the work is developed towards a portrayal of the increasingly narrow space available for human beings and other living creatures (flora and fauna). The burning of forests, exploitation of land for natural resources, and disputes between members of the community over land claims are all hot topics that frequently inspire works of art. This particular work aims to make people more aware that land must be protected from damage and human greed. The ideal system of land ownership that exists in the traditional Minangkabau culture presents an alternative for the way people treat land, but this ideal condition is no longer easy to find.

The design used in the creation of the work of art entitled “The Margin of Our Land” is a combination of choreographic design, directorial design, and dramaturgical design. The choreographic design in this performance is a collaboration of Minangkabau *silat* and *ulu ambek* movements, modern dance movements, and contemporary dance movements. The directorial design focuses on creating a spectacle to develop the atmosphere, theme, dialogue, character, and plot. The dramaturgical design is concerned mainly with the culture that is created by the work.

**Keywords:** design, creation, dance theatre

**DOI:** 10.7176/ADS/77-08

**Publication date:** October 31<sup>st</sup> 2019

## 1. Introduction

The social and cultural conditions in Minangkabau, which some people are still trying to preserve, are like the different parts of a crossword puzzle. The person trying to complete the puzzle needs clues such as the first letter, last letter, and number of letters in a particular word. These three requirements are the first ones that need to be met. Content, meaning, purpose, and goals depend on whether or not these three requirements are suitable. “Ulayat land cannot be sold” is a statement that has become a slogan in the lives of the Minangkabau people, but it is only a slogan in the sense that it is an attempt to find the first letter, last letter, and number of letters in the puzzle; not the meaning, experiences, or whether it is in context with the reality of the objective in the field. The

reality is that many areas of ulayat land are traded for building purposes.

What remains of the Minangkabau culture – the *surau* (prayer houses), traditional *gadang* houses, *balai adat* (communal halls), traditional costumes of local leaders, traditional ceremonies, and so on – can no longer be actualized or repositioned. All these things are being stripped away and left to disappear. There is not a single community or *nagari* (village) that wishes to and is able to establish a communal hall. Local leaders are becoming increasingly concerned with their appearance and adding more and more accessories to their own traditional costumes. But the worst thing happening is that the Minangkabau people are losing their land.

The people of Minangkabau will never escape this current cultural crisis because they have lost motivation and incentive. They prefer to shed tears, to pray, to utter proverbs or aphorisms. When they witness a new building being constructed on ulayat land that used to belong to their own community, they proudly wipe away their tears while saying: all of this already exists in our customs, in our aphorisms. It has all been arranged by our ancestors. One line is not forgotten, one drop is not lost (*sabarih indak lupu, satitiak indak ilang*). Our customs are not cracked by the heat, not rotted by the rain (*tak lakang dek paneh, tak lapuk dek ujan*). But in truth, this attitude is part of the cultural lies that the Minangkabau people tell themselves.

The way ulayat land is treated by the Minangkabau people today is a cause for concern that needs to be addressed to ensure that these painful events do not reoccur. The work entitled “The Margin of Our Land” offers a defence against the loss of the inheritance of ulayat land in Minangkabau. Minangkabau is a matrilineal society. Individuals view themselves as descendants of their mothers and grandmothers. This line of descent means that inheritance is passed down from a mother’s family, so when a woman dies, property is passed to her descendants in accordance with the mother line. Local leaders must try to ensure that the inheritance of the families in their communities is not pawned in a manner that is inappropriate. Leaders must implement the traditional saying: *barek samo dipikua, ringan samo dijinjiang*, which means that whether a burden is heavy or light, it must be carried together.

The land conditions that exist in Minangkabau are in fact the same throughout the world. The continual building and development by people everywhere means that the land left for other living creatures (flora and fauna) is becoming narrower and narrower. Global warming, forest fires, and other such problems are examples of the mistreatment of nature. Balance needs to be restored so that disaster can be avoided.

Problems related to land cannot be separated from the sovereignty of a nation or country. A sovereign country is one that has control over its earth, water, sky, and all the wealth contained therein. A sovereign country – in this case Indonesia – should never surrender this control of its land, water, or sky to any other country or individual from outside. This is the reason why agrarian law does not allow non-Indonesian citizens to own land or property. If people from outside Indonesia were allowed to own land and buildings, it would seem as though they were taking control of the Indonesian nation.

## 2. Literature Study

The concept of art creation for the dance theatre performance “The Margin of Our Land” is related to art theory, not theory about art. After carrying out a data search using the concept of phenomenology, the data was processed to form a concept of art creation in which the basis of the creation used grounded theory (Bryant and Charmaz, 2010). Grounded theory refers to something that is not dreamt up, is not a manipulation of an idea of something that rarely happens in real life. This theory endeavours to construct a theoretical concept in the life of the arts by relying on empirical experience. Whoever has an accumulation of empirical experience in the arts, besides those artists who are already qualified in a particular field of art, is said to be an art creator.

In social science, grounded theory was at one time introduced as a theory which meant that researchers were not allowed to carry with them any preconceived ideas or concepts when entering the field, other than the competence to delve into real life and record it in as much detail as possible, while keeping in mind their objectives or goals. From these detailed notes there would emerge a concept that was actually implemented in real life. Grounded theory should have a clear objective such as a ‘sense of stability in a movement’. Thus, the ‘ground’ that is investigated with extra care is the existence of art that is connected to movement and to this sense of stability. At the end of this grounded search is a concept about the sense of stability and the elements that build this sense of stability. This is an example of how this theory operates in the arts discipline.

Grounded theory has been implemented by art creators – in an extreme sense – from the time they were born. The form of this theory is to perform and position art as part of their daily lives, and in this way it is automatically recorded in the brain. This is practiced for decades. Not only this, they have also received the

'legacy' of their ancestors from hundreds of years ago. From this, various art concepts arise, and these are directly used when the creator performs or creates art. How is a creator able to perform or create a work of dance theatre, for example, if he or she does not have any idea about the concepts of theatrical movement, all of which are theoretical in nature? These concepts are stored neatly in the creator's day-to-day artistic life. And because these concepts are constantly internalized and practiced as part of the routine of the artist's life, they become so embodied in the mind of the creator that they no longer need to be recorded or published in the literal sense. This is the essence of the way the art discipline works in giving rise to various art concepts through the empirical experiences in the day to day life of the arts. Depending on the situation, in its implementation today, the technical details can be developed and recorded using modern-day systems, although in essence it still remains the same.

### 3. Method

The idea for the treatment of the dance theatre work entitled "The Margin of Our Land", which materializes as an event, is like the treatment of land that is always connected to human beings, to space, and to time, a social and individual event, a cultural and historical event in a person's life, and so on. Therefore, in addition to utilizing the idiom of Minangkabau *silat* movement and making use of spaces that represent the existence of land, this work also requires an artistic touch that reflects the needs of today.

The performance of this work is a presentation of dance theatre supported by traditional Minangkabau music and electronic music, together with visual multimedia, to represent a portrayal of the destruction of civilization as a result of indiscriminate, extensive building. Various dramatic elements, such as the treatment of events in the work, are play an important role in demonstrating the existence of land ownership. The utilization of various artistic elements support the needs of the dance theatre performance.

### 4. Discussion

#### 4.1 Choreographic Design

The performance of dance theatre "The Margin of Our Land" is a cultural divarication through icons of movement that are universalized. The properties are used in such a way as to present the paths of life that are moving incessantly and leading towards the various meanings of (inherited) ulayat land in Minangkabau. With only the use of properties such as a police line and wooden bludgeons, this performance is laden with inner conflict, especially of those human beings who are involved in the control of ulayat land.

The source of movement in this performance is a collaboration of (Minangkabau) *silat* and *ulu ambek* movements, modern dance movements, and contemporary dance movements. The *silat* and *ulu ambek* movements are used as a starting point which develops into to a more contemporary performance. This is an example of the concept of interculturalism in the art of dance. Interculturalism is concerned with the diversity and cross culture faced by every community (in this case the dance community), and provokes people into developing a better awareness.

"The Margin of Our Land" is a performance with a traditional-based contemporary form. The process of collaboration does not eliminate the *silat* and *ulu ambek* movements but rather attempts to combine them with modern movements to create something that appears new and can be enjoyed by all elements of the supporting community. Traditional movements remain alive and are developed in accordance with their function. The creation of something new is precisely what is needed to enrich the wealth of art that already exists in Indonesia. In this work, these changes are clearly visible.

In the dance theatre performance "The Margin of Our Land", *silat* can be seen in the patterns of movement such as *sumbang* and *batua*. These two movements mean 'to eat' or 'be eaten'. There are four characteristics of *silat gunuang*: *garak*, *garik*, *raso*, and *pareso* (movement, gesture, feeling, and check). There is no such movement as *langkah mati* (lethal step) in *silat gunuang*, and the eyes of the *silat* artist never look directly into the eyes of the opponent. The meaning of this is that each artist is keeping his own strength hidden.

#### 4.2 Directorial Design

Directing is concerned with building the structure and texture of the performance. In his book entitled *Invitation to the Theatre* second edition (1978: 265), Kernodle describes structure and texture as follows:

*In either case, a play has six possible dramatic values, and all six may help in different ways to give the*

*play organization and unity. Aristotle listed them as plot, character, theme, dialogue, music (interpreted in modern drama to mean "mood" or "rhythm"), and spectacle. The first three values concern the structure of the play, the last three the texture.*

The structure in the dance theatre "The Margin of Our Land" consists of plot, character, and theme, and the texture consists of dialogue, atmosphere, and spectacle. The plot may also be referred to as the action, which in Kernodle's words comprises the exposition, conflict, complication, climax, anticipation, confrontation and conclusion. The exposition is a depiction of the events in the performance. The conflict is the tension or emergence of complication. The complication is associated with the complexity of the intertwining events. The climax is the peak of the complexity that has been building since the beginning. The anticipation is the way out that is used to lead to the resolution of events. The confrontation is the steps used to create suspense in the contested events. The conclusion is the way to resolve the events. In short, the plot is the summary of the story. The plot is different from the story because of the way it presents the connections in the story sequence and events. The plot in itself is the sequence of events that are related causally.

The plot in the dance theatre "The Margin of Our Land" tends towards a linear plot which presents the story from start to finish. The first events describe the restlessness of a figure whose land is being taken away by the authorities or people in power. The term used by these people is "compensation" (*ganti rugi* or literally 'replace loss'), which means that after receiving the 'replacement', a person will experience a loss. This continues for quite some time until the person becomes traumatized. Events continue with a public rebellion and prolonged conflict. In the final section, the land can be seen being divided into lots based on the specific interests of those who hold power.

Character in a work of theatre refers to the source of action and dialogue. Character should be created to meet the needs of the plot, and all the different parts of characterization must fit in with one another. If all the characters in a story are the same, there will be no story. Interest arises from conflict between the different characters. As far as possible, they should not be made the same. Character is related to the attitudes, interests, emotions, desires, and moral principles of the people in the story. Therefore, character may also refer to the 'story's actors' and their 'characterization'. There should be complete cohesion between a particular figure and his or her character. Often, when the name of a particular person is mentioned, it immediately gives us a hint about his or her character.

The characters of the people in "The Margin of Our Land" tend mainly towards communal characters. In this performance there are both group characters and individual characters. The group characters consist of groups of people. The individual characters are those who disassociate from the group. The people in a particular group are seen only from the point of view of their profession, even though they are all individuals. The character of the people in a particular group is only viewed according to the character of their profession. The character of one of the groups in the performance of "The Margin of Our Land" leads them to social action in order to defend their status and to maintain their survival. Social action is related to the interaction between individuals or groups of a community, is indicated by the presence of action and reaction, and contains an element of provocation and response (Soekanto, 1975: 58-60). Social action is a part of social work which is committed to acting as an agent or a resource for those who are struggling against a variety of problems related to their various life necessities.

In "The Margin of Our Land", one community group is endeavouring to preserve its source of livelihood, even though there are differences of opinion within the group itself. Most of the people do not really agree with the changes that are causing them to be evicted. Whenever change occurs inside the group, it is the result of consensus rather than coercion. Coercion will cause a community group to act against its policy makers. This group of people in "The Margin of Our Land" is a group that is considered human but can be controlled by others. Depending on their individual characters, some people are easily controlled by power. Power is the mind of a character that is built inside a movement of people. The power group in "The Margin of Our Land" is a group of people who are also considered human but who have a habit of stealing. As thieves, the people in this power group justify any means to an end and are inclined to have no regard for other people's losses resulting from their actions, as long as they are able to survive, even if it means others will suffer.

The people in "The Margin of Our Land" attempt to combine the power of their minds, muscles, and hearts to improve their life and their livelihood. If people use their minds well, they will always remain cautious and watchful. They will be forward-thinking, predicting what may happen so that they can stay on guard. When deciding whether or not violence is necessary, people should begin by planning something and thinking long and carefully before taking action. Demonstrations must have a logical reason that can be accounted for. When carrying out a task together with others or in an organization, people cannot manage by themselves.

A high moral character is one way of measuring a person's values. Good ethics is a characteristic every individual should possess. Since centuries ago, Indonesia has proven that the morality of the nation is damaged, and it is a certainty that at some point in the future this nation will perish. It will be destroyed, crushed to pieces, and swallowed by history. Law in Indonesia also clearly regulates courtesy and manners in social interaction. It is believed that good morals and courteous manners in day to day interaction with others will prevent us from becoming involved in controversy or dispute. A person's good morals will always be remembered by others, even after he or she has long been laid to rest.

Theme is the core issue on which a story is built, and it is this issue that gives rise to the dynamics of a performance. The theme of a story holds a strategic position as the carrier and presenter of a message, mandate, moral, or anything that is purposely intended to be conveyed to the audience. A theme is more like a reflection of the thoughts, attitudes, opinions, and wishes of the author. The relationships between theme, character, and plot form a single inseparable unit. A theme is constructed by the characters that exist within the storyline in accordance with the author's wishes.

The main theme of "The Margin of Our Land" is that of a community which is nothing more than a puppet of the authorities. The tyrannical behaviour of those in power causes the people to feel oppressed. In addition, the events in each scene also carry their own set of problems. The problems faced by the poor people, the subdivision of land into lots, the questionable establishment of new land, and the problem of eviction all colour the performance, creating a complexity of problems which support the theme that is presented globally. All of these problems are joined together within a tidy space.

The creator attempts to actualize values of reality with values of creativity. Reality is the strata which organize the life and livelihood of a community within the framework of humanization. The reality of law, for example, creates a community that is founded on and rests on self-existence in the midst of its social life. This is portrayed in "The Margin of Our Land", which questions the problem of reclamation in relation to property ownership.

In "The Margin of Our Land", the questioning of wealth, power, truth, and so on in this country (Indonesia) also leads to the problem of politics and the Indonesian government. The ambiguity of meaning, not only in relation to land destruction, makes it possible for this work to be enjoyed by all audiences. Regulations are only a tool to express all the problems that exist in this country. It is clear here that the creator manages to bring to life ideas through the performers' bodies, which will remain actual for the rest of time. To the creator, the performers' bodies are a powerful weapon for questioning many things, while the shape or form of the work addresses universal matters.

The action or plot of a work tells about the events that occur, while the characters explain the reasons why the events occur (Kernodle, 1978: 265-266). It is the characters that motivate the events. The characters perform actions based on the motivation that exists inside themselves, and from this motivation the psychological dimension of the characters can be known. The plot is the summary of the story. The plot is different from the story because of the way it presents the connections of the story sequence and events. The plot in itself is the sequence of events that are related causally.

In dance theatre, the plot primarily pays attention to the events that are taking place. Everything that happens in dance theatre is discussed in the plot. A performance of dance theatre consists of a series of events or episodes which follow on from each other according to the plan of the writer; every event is connected – always within an invisible path – to the events that follow. It is the structure of a plot that points to the entire organization of the theatre work. The analysis of the plot is more thorough than the structure of the plot. The analysis of the plot is directed more towards everything that is happening in the work. In other words, the analysis of the plot analyzes all the different kinds of incidents that involve conflict inside the theatre performance.

Kernodle explains that a work of dance theatre is not a narration, not only a dialogue or conversation, but also an interaction (1978: 267). Every utterance by every character demands a reaction from the other characters. This is what keeps dance theatre audiences interested in following the story. They are keen to see what happens next. The opening section is the exposition. This stage explains to the audience about the events that have already happened and the events that are now taking place. In this way, the audience does not feel disconnected from the story being presented. The next section is the complication. In this section, the tension begins to appear. Subsequently, the tension continues to rise, gradually becoming stronger and stronger until it reaches a minor climax. After this, there are two choices: either to slowly reduce the tension or to continue building towards an even greater tension. The confrontation that appears becomes increasingly stronger until it reaches a major point of crisis.



In general, after reaching this stage, the tension is no longer able to subside but must continue to rise. The confrontation reaches a major crisis point which may serve as the peak of all the tension, or the major climax. After this comes the conclusion or the denouement, a French term which refers to the resolution of the plot. In this section, everything becomes clear (the peripeteia).

In “The Margin of Our Land”, the plot is an important element. It begins with the entrance of a group of people who are dividing an area of land into lots. This gives an indication that the original situation in this first event is not good. The body of the artist is an expression of the abuse of power. The unfortunate circumstances portrayed may be the result of disaster, of destruction by foreign influence, and so on. The purpose of this event is to remind the Indonesian people that new things do not always lead to an advance of civilization; on the contrary they may actually cause the destruction of civilization.

The silence on the stage in the opening scene of the performance shows that quiet is not always synonymous with apathy. Quiet may be a sign of vigilance about something that is coming to threaten. In Minangkabau *silat*, a still position is a sign that a person is ready to be attacked. People who are moving give the impression of being in a condition of conflict.

The subjugation presented in “The Margin of Our Land” is based on a thought concept about the subjugation of identity as a result of a cultural clash that has come to a head. In order to avoid this clash, the people in “The Margin of Our Land” need a form of political unity to live together. This kind of communal life system is referred to as a living structure in the modern era in which people are free from all boundaries and limitations. People’s desire for independence, autonomy, referendum, and so on is the desire of all those who feel they are being suppressed by a power that cares only about its own interests. But these desires always collide with whoever or whatever has control over them – the provocateurs. These provocateurs arrange everything so that people remain ignorant.

According to Kernodle, character is what makes one person different from another, and motivates the mind of an actor so that the person he or she is portraying feels real to the audience (1978: 267). Characterization is the most active material that propels a storyline. Character is made up of personality and disposition. According to Abrams (1981: 20), character refers to the people who appear in a dramatic work, who are interpreted by the reader as having particular moral qualities and tendencies that are expressed in their utterances and in their actions. From this citation, it can be seen that the qualities of a particular personality are closely related to audience acceptance, in particular from the point of view of reception theory, in which it is the audience that provides the meaning. In the case of a character’s personality, this interpretation is determined based on words (verbal) and other (nonverbal) behaviour.

Dialogue is associated with language. In theatre, dialogue covers a broad area because it is also related to language style. Language has multiple meanings that may be connected with denotation and also connotation. Denotation is related to dictionary definition, while connotation is related to the emotions of a character so that the meaning conveyed is no longer that of the meaning in the dictionary. Dialogue in theatre also takes into consideration paraphrasing. Paraphrasing is carried out by translating something into one’s own language, word by word, sentence by sentence, as though the words given by the writer of the theatre script are in a foreign language. Actors must have the ability to give meaning to the emphasis of the words they utter in a theatrical performance.

Atmosphere is the domain of musicality in a performance, and is where the mood and rhythm can be found. A particular atmosphere or mood can be developed through music, tempo, and the rhythm of the dialogue performed by the actors on the stage. Atmosphere is a condition in which the rhythm of the performance matches the wishes of the director. Rhythm can be described as the varying sequence of change, and when the flow is even, without any intensity of variation or speed, there is no rhythm. A change in rhythm is an occurrence of terror that differs from the expectations of recovery. Every event that takes place complements the connection with the previous event and leads to a connection with the following event in the text. Aristotle refers to the following section as the music.

Spectacle is the visualization of the production or what becomes visible in the production. Spectacle includes matters of costume, makeup, staging and properties, as well as the performance of the actor or actress, lighting, voice and intonation of the dialogue presented by the actors, and anything else related to the production. Spectacle is felt more in how the different acts or scenes are staged, which makes the details of the events in the production become more visible. Soemanto writes that spectacle is the visual aspects of a play, especially the physical action of the characters. Spectacle refers to the division of scenes, the costumes, makeup, lighting, and properties (Soemanto, 2001: 23–24). The director is expected to have the necessary skills to visualize the text or

to present it in a visual form in the performance. In this way, the theatre audience will be able to enjoy the performance more. To perfect the textural analysis, every event is analyzed in such a way that the text can be properly understood.

Elam, in his book entitled *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*, looks at structure and text in more detail. He writes:

*One can continue to locate multiple components all the way along the communicational circuit. The transmitters become, in the first instance, the bodies and voices of the actors, together with their metonymic accessories (costumes, properties, etc.), then elements of the set, electric lamps, musical instruments, tape recorders, film projectors, and so on. The signals transmitted by these bodies—movements, sounds, electrical impulses—are selected and arranged syntactically according to a wide range of sign—or signalling systems and travel through any number of the physical channels available for human communication, from light and sound waves to olfactory and tactile means (in modern 'contact' performances smell and touch become significant constraints upon reception of the whole text) (Elam, 1980: 32).*

Elam's thoughts on structure and texture in a theatre production support those of Kernodle. In the semiotic paradigm, this search is to construct a new theoretical concept of the performance text. The meaning of a performance is the result of the comprehensive analysis of the performance text so that a completely new text is discovered.

#### 4.3 Dramaturgical Design

The discussion of the values contained in the performance of "The Margin of Our Land" borrows from the theory of Minangkabau culture. This theory of Minangkabau culture is used to observe the cultural values that are absorbed in "The Margin of Our Land". Wisran Hadi states that the values contained in the matrilineal system in Minangkabau include: the protection of property of a family (one of three conditions must be met by a family in order to pawn – not sell – "high" heirlooms) and the freedom of men to earn a living (outlined in the institution of *merantau*, or relocating to another area), which are proof of the changes in the way men act and think, and this is what makes matrilinealism (Hadi, 2005: 4). This means there is a tendency for every man to surrender part of his inheritance of *pusako randah* ("low" heirlooms) to his sisters. This is similar to the values of "*duduak samo randah tagak samo tinggi*", which means that the Minangkabau people always keep in mind the concept of being the same as everyone else.

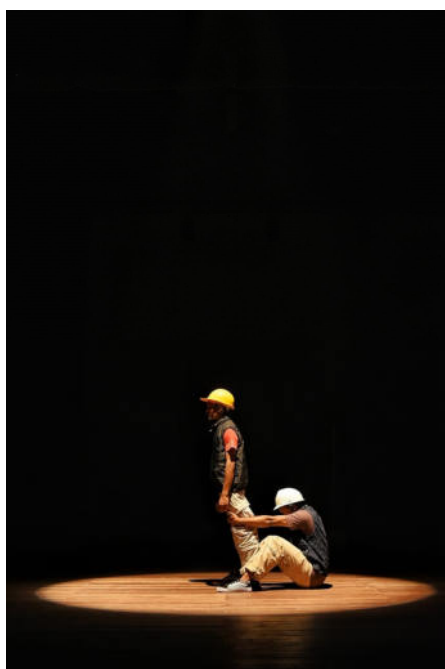


Figure 1: Opening scene of The Margin of Our Land Performance (foto by: Denny)

Navis writes that the process of development of folk games (including art) in Minangkabau was concurrent with the process of development of the social life of the community, in particular after the establishment of secular schools alongside the Islamic madrasah education system (Navis, 1984: 281). From that time forward, traditional art was viewed as a product of the *parewa*. In secular education circles it was deemed to be an uneducated art form, and in madrasah circles as an art that renounced the faith. The *parewa* were a group of young men who led an open lifestyle that was sometimes considered to go against the religious norms upheld by more fanatical groups. In the negative sense, *parewa* were regarded as thugs, while in the positive sense, they were seen as young men who defended their own communities. The secular community was strongly influenced by Western art while the madrasah community preferred Islamic art or Arabic art forms. In subsequent developments, a new style of art emerged that was born out of a combination of traditional art and modern Western art.

Graves (2007: 11) explains that the primary determining factor in the dynamics of the traditional Minangkabau community is the presence of constant competition between individuals and families to gain honour and status, including positions that are achieved independently as well as positions that are awarded or gained by the power and prestige according to traditional lines of descent. Graves adds that specific cultural values of Minangkabau society are its village communities (*nagari*), matrilineal line of descent, family ownership, relationship between father and child, role of headsmen, and family status.

According to Wisran Hadi (2005: 5), there are two things that perhaps differentiate Minangkabau people from other ethnic groups or races, related to the way they think and how it affects their behaviour and their actions. These two important aspects are known as the *world of women* and the *world of rantau*. The world of women refers to the tendency of Minangkabau people to place women at the centre of all their cultural activities, as the continuation of the matrilineal system that they have inherited. The world of women is the canopy which shows that they are continuing to uphold the Minangkabau tradition, the matrilineal system, and the customary inheritance system, and take pride in their villages and traditional *gadang* houses, complete with all their customary titles and ceremonies.

The world of *rantau* can be described as an open-minded way of thinking, characterized by acting in a more expansive manner (searching for a new area, moving to a new place [*rantau*]), in a way that is pragmatic and egalitarian, cosmopolitan combined with various irregularities. Between the world of women and the world of *rantau* there are several conflicting problems. Under the canopy of the world of women, the Minangkabau people are devout, loyal to their tradition and their culture, and melancholy (finding an outlet by becoming traditional *dendang* vocalists or authors). Under the canopy of the world of *rantau*, people must prove their excellence in any manner of ways, whether halal or haram.

## 5. Conclusion

The performance of “The Margin of Our Land” is filled with a mandate which is the result of clashes or conflicts of interest and indicates that there are still issues which need to be properly resolved. Each of the people representing or supporting a particular interest has his or her own truth. On the stage, these different interests are involved in various kinds of conflict – political, economic, religious, historical, and land ownership. From these multiple layers of conflict the creator of the work brings to life a complex set of arguments.

The conflict in “The Margin of Our Land” involves a group of people who hold power. The group of people may change function at any moment. They are never in the same position from start to finish.

At the present time, Indonesia is stricken by moral chaos, such as eviction (which in “The Margin of Our Land” is referred to as power). It seems that there is not anyone in power who is not involved in corruption. Suspects appear everywhere, stealing money from the state with a variety of excuses. When these officials steal, they use the money to pay for their own pleasures such as “buying” pretty women, luxury cars, and houses worth billions of rupiah.

In Indonesia today there are also many provocateurs (in “The Margin of Our Land” referred to as disrupters). These disrupters take advantage of the chaotic situation for their own advantage. Like the proverb “fishing in troubled waters”, these provocateurs involve themselves in the chaos to try and make it worse, thus leading to conditions that are difficult to control.

## References

Abrams. M.H, (1981), *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.



- Amri, Ulil, Vismaia S. Damaianti, (2016). “Pengaruh Penggunaan Teknik Bermain Drama Melalui Teater Tradisional Randai Berbasis Kepercayaan Diri Terhadap Kemampuan Apresiasi Drama”, *EduHumaniora: Jurnal Pendidikan Dasar* ISSN 2085-1243, Vol. 8. No.2 July 2016 Hal 186-197
- Bryant, Antony and Kathy Charmaz, (2010), *The SAGE Handbook of Grounded Theory*. SAGE: Los Angeles
- Elam, Keir, 1980, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*, New York: Routledge, London.
- Graves, Elizabeth E, (2007), *Asal-Usul Elite Minangkabau Modern: Respon terhadap Kolonial Belanda Abad XIX/XX*, translated by Novi Andri et al, Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia.
- Hadi, Wisran, (2005), “Menumbuh Kembangkan Teater di Sekolah”, academic paper, *Simposium Guru Sumatra Barat*, Padang: Taman Budaya, 2 September 2005.
- Jaeni, (2019). “Teater Sebagai Media Komunikasi Pendidikan”, *Jurnal ASPIKOM*, Volume 3 No. 6, January 2019, pp. 1124-1139.
- Kernodle, George and Portia Kernodle, (1978), *Invitation to the Theatre*, second edition, New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc.
- Navis, A.A., (1984), *Alam Berkembang Jadi Guru Adat dan Kebudayaan Minangkabau*. Jakarta: Grafiti Press.
- Soekanto, Soerjono, (1975), *Sosiologi Suatu Pengantar*, Jakarta: Rajawali Pers.
- Soemanto, Bakdi, (2001), *Jagat Teater*, Yogyakarta: Media Pressindo.
- Suprajitno, Setefanus, (2017), “Teater sebagai Media untuk Pengabdian Masyarakat”, *Jurnal Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat*, vol. 3, No. 1, September 2017